ber 31, 1991 and three preceeding financial years, year-wise and airline-wise; and

(b) the net inward remittances by the Air India and the Indian Airlines for the same period, year-wise and country-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) and (b). The requisite information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Reply to Letters Received from M.Ps.

1776. SHRI RAJNATH SONNKAR SHASTRI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of letters received by him from the Members of Parliament during the last nine months, month-wise;

(b) the number of letters, out of the above, which have been acknowledged/ given final replies and how many are still pending for acknowledgement giving final replies, month-wise; and

(c) the steps taken to expedite the replies and to check delay in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SHANTARAM POTDUKHE): (a) Following number of letters have been received by Finance Minister from Members of Parliament month-wise during the last nine months:

Month	*Letters received*
June, 1991	4
July	174
August	445
September	396
October	210
November	220
December	389
January, 1992	299
Febrauary	246

(b) All the letters as at (a) above have been acknowledged/given final reply.

(c) Instructions already exist that prompt action should be taken on letters received from Members of Parliament.

[*Translation*]

Lok Adalats in Bihar

1777. SHRI SURYA NARAYAN YADAV: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Lok Adalats set up in Saharsa, Purnea, Madhepura, supaul and Katihar districts of Bihar so far;

(b) the number of cases disposed of in these Adalats; and

(c) the number of Lok Adalats proposed to be set up during 1992-93?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIR AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE AND AFFAIRS (SHRI RANGARAJAN KUMARAMANGALAM): (a) and (b). The requisite information is being collected from the Sihar State Legal Aid & Advice Board

and would be laid on the Table of the House as soon as received.

(c) Lok Adalats are not regularly constituted law courts. They are voluntary efforts for resolution of disputes through cnciliation and persuasion. Lok Adalats are being organised by the State Legas Aid 7 Advice Boards and District legal Aid Committees etc. from in different parts of the country.

Investement by Foreign Companies

1778. SHRI SURYA NARAYAN YADAV: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state.

(a) whether the Government have recently changed the policy inviting foreign companies to invest and open their branhes in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of offices of foreign companies in the country as on December 31, 1991; and

(d) the net amount of foreign exchange brought into the country by these companies during 1991?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) and (b). Till recently only Airlines and shipping companies were allowed to open branches on reciprocal basis. However, according to the Press Reslease issued by the RBI on 29th January, 1992, foreign companies would be permitted to open branch offices on receipt of applications from them by the RBI. No guidelines have been formulated by the RBI so far.

(c) The number of Airlines having branches in India is 54 and number of shipping companies/Shipping Register is 8.

(d) The Airlines and shipping Companies do not normally bring in foreign exchange.

[English]

Export of Castings

1779. SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a great scope for increasing the export of castings;

(b) if so, the steps proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard;

(c) whether the Government propose to upgrade casting technology; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Export of castings have been on the increase as the following figures would indicate:-

Rs. Crores

1988-89	*1989-90*	*1990-91*
47	97	180

EEPC has set a target of Rs. 205 crores for export of castings during 1991-92.

(b) to (d). Apart from substantial liberalisation of industrial and trade policies oriented particularly towards increasing India's exports, specifically for the castings sector, the Goveernment has constituted an extreme focus group to suggest strategy for achieving increased growth in their exports. Through the liberalisation effected in industrial policy, the Government have facilitated